

# Birch Lake Association

PO Box 125, Hackensack, MN 56452

Check out our new website: [www.mybirchlake.org](http://www.mybirchlake.org)

Get your Birch Lake Association shirt! \$20 (contact Viv Palmer).



Dedicated to the Preservation and Improvement of Birch Lake and its Environment

Winter 2010

**IMPORTANT:** Please let Jerry Secora (secora77@tds.net) know if you would like to receive the Newsletter by e-mail or if your address has changed. Please consider receiving it via e-mail if at all possible to reduce cost and save resources.

## ICE FISHING SEASON TIPS

Now that the winter fishing season is upon us here on Birch Lake, here are some tips from the Minnesota DNR to keep you safe on the ice:



Remember that these thicknesses are merely guidelines for new, clear, solid ice. Many factors other than thickness can cause ice to be unsafe.

Ice is seldom the same thickness over a single body of water. It can be two feet thick in one place and one inch thick a few yards away due to currents, springs, rotting vegetation or school of rough fish. Check the ice at least every 150 feet, especially early in the season or where ice thickness varies widely.

If you are looking for a great time to take your kids fishing, keep in mind the [Take A Kid Ice Fishing Weekend](#), February 13th-15th, 2010. For more details, see their web site at:

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/minnaqua/icefishing/index.html>

## MEMBER LETTERS

"We believe the newly remodeled Saint Joseph's Medical Center in town is a Godsend for us. Julie Malnati, PA-C and Nicolas Bernier M.D. are outstanding in their profession. My mother and I have made them our primary care provider. Julie Malnati calls you and follows up with any kind of issue, tests results or just to see how you are feeling. She loves her job and has helped us tremendously. My mother had the good fortune of seeing Dr. Bernier and was equally impressed. The whole staff there is excellent! Who says a small town doesn't have the best of everything? We went to their grand opening and donated to the cause. Well I mean to tell you that the new staff is wonderful, so spread the word to all of the locals we have the best right here in Hackensack.

All of the local businesses I've dealt with are outstanding. The owners and employees are so friendly and professional in our community. My neighbors are even wonderful, how can you beat that?"

Very proud of Hackensack,  
Denny Harnstrom (a new local and BLA member)  
Ret. Chief Engineer

## Show Your Birch Lake Pride!

Stylish blue shirts with the My Birch Lake and Birch Lake Association logos on the front are available for \$20: Order from Viv Palmer.



## **NEWS FROM THE ACCL** (Association of Cass County Lakes)

### **Oh, no! Zebra Mussels in Gull Lake!**

It came as a shock that a “premier” lake in Brainerd Lakes Country would be infested by zebra mussels, but it’s true. Dock handlers from Nisswa Dock came across the nasty critters on boat lifts they removed from Gull Lake in early October – making the popular lake now an “infested lake.” They reported their find to the DNR. Dan Swanson of DNR in Brainerd said “zebras” infestation is currently on the east and west sides.

The “zebras” were young, suggesting an adult population reproducing. Adult zebras – so named because of yellowish and black stripes on their backs – grow to up to 2 inches long. They attach to even, smooth surfaces, like boat hulls, by filament-like “threads” Native to eastern Europe and western Russia, they were first discovered in the Duluth harbor in 1989. They now infest over Minnesota 30 lakes and numerous rivers.

This report is the FIRST discovery of zebra mussels in a Cass County lake. Be on the lookout for these critters so they don’t spread to others in our county!!

### **Congrats to ACCL Member Associations**

To the Baby, Kerr, Kid, Lost, Man and McKeown Lakes Association, upon receiving a \$5,000 grant from the Little Falls-based Initiative Foundation, for the association's efforts to restore shoreland using native species, to develop education and prevention programs for aquatic invasive species, and its monitoring of water quality levels.

To the Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association (RALALA) upon receiving a \$5,000 grant from Initiative Foundation, for its on-going Water Quality Protection Project. The program is aimed at preserving water quality through identification of source issues, such as wastewater treatment systems surrounding Roosevelt and nearby Lawrence Lakes. RALALA was also cited for its AIS education and encouraging shoreline restoration using native species.

### **Uf dah. Faucet Snails Spread South From Lake Winnie**

As if the spread of dangerous zebra mussels is not enough to worry about, these little critters, faucet snails, have spread south in the Mississippi River from Lake Winnibigoshish. They have taken a big toll on the fly-by diving duck population by carrying an intestinal parasite, called trematodes. The DNR reports that it has caused the death of thousands of diving ducks.

There is no evidence the parasite affects fish or wildlife other than waterfowl. The snails were first found in Lake Winnie in 2007, probably brought there as an “aquatic hitchhiker” on a boat or trailer. They are now found as far south as Winona in the Mississippi. The non-native snails have spread downstream of the Winnie dam into Cass and Itasca counties, to just below White Oak Lake. This includes the Leech River downstream of the Mud Lake dam in Cass County. These areas are now designated by DNR as infested waters.

*From the Leech Lake Watershed Newsletter...*

### **NEW “SCORE YOUR SHORE” TOOL AVAILABLE FROM THE DNR**

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/scoreyourshore/index.html>

The Minnesota DNR’s new *Score Your Shore* tool is designed to help you self-assess the habitat conditions and stewardship on your shoreland property and adjacent aquatic areas. The tool, available online at the above link, provides an objective and systematic method to assess the type, quantity and quality of the existing shoreland habitat. It also generates awareness of what makes a high quality functioning shoreline buffer. Try it!

### **MINNESOTANS SPEAK OUT**

Minnesotans spoke out on a variety of water-related issues as part of the Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework Project’s “[Minnesotans and Their Water](#)” survey. More than 4,500 respondents from all over the state contributed to the survey. “We heard about what was important to people at the local level and how they feel about statewide water-related programs and current policies,” said Barb Liukkonen, the study co-chair from the University of Minnesota Water Resources Center. “And frankly, we’re surprised by the commonality of the answers.”

“This is particularly interesting as current policy and practices are primarily set up to address impaired surface waters. And it is not surprising that Minnesotans want measurable outcomes, accountability, and clear assessments of whether waters are improving,” said Liukkonen. Among the most serious threats to Minnesota’s water supply, responders ranked chemical pollution, followed by excessive nutrients, invasive species, and loss of wetlands. You can find this survey at:

[http://wrc.umn.edu/prod/groups/cfans/@pub/@cfans/@wrc/documents/asset/cfans\\_asset\\_224461.pdf](http://wrc.umn.edu/prod/groups/cfans/@pub/@cfans/@wrc/documents/asset/cfans_asset_224461.pdf)



*Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation*

PO Box 455  
Hackensack, MN 56452  
218-675-5773  
[www.leechlakewatershed.org](http://www.leechlakewatershed.org)

Tax ID # 41-1887906

10/14/2010

Birch Lake Association  
PO Box 125  
Hackensack, MN 56452

Dear *Bill*

Thank you for your recent donation of \$200.00 to the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation (LLAWF). Your support allows LLAWF to protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and valuable natural resources in the Leech Lake watershed. We accomplish this by conserving environmentally sensitive lands through acquisitions and conservation easements, encouraging individual stewardship, and supporting sound local land use decisions by local government.

Since being founded in 1995, the LLAWF has completed 31 land conservation projects conserving 79,000 feet of shoreland (over 15 miles) and preserving 2,000 acres of land valued at over \$13 million. Many of these completed projects have returned the land to public ownership and management for perpetuity to prevent development and provide public use and enjoyment of these natural resources.

The LLAWF is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, which qualifies your donation as fully tax-deductible for 2010. No goods and services were received in exchange for this donation. Please retain this letter for your tax records.

Thank you again for support to help the LLAWF achieve its mission of preserving the woods, water, and wildlife of this special area for future generations to enjoy. Working together we can achieve common-sense conservation of the irreplaceable natural resources that underpin the economy, recreational opportunity and quality of life that makes Minnesota such a great place to live and play.

In support of our natural resources,

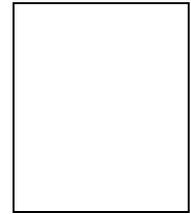
Paula West, Executive Director  
Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation

*To Bill -*

*Thank you for your continued support.*

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Coming Soon: **Birch Lake Association Art Contest!!**

Get your crayons, glue, and glitter ready! Birch Lake Association will be holding an Art Contest next summer. Entries of drawings, paintings, photos (any medium!!) of Birch Lake native fish species will be accepted from ALL AGES! Winning entries in each age category will receive prizes.

Watch the spring newsletter and [www.mybirchlake.org](http://www.mybirchlake.org) for entry forms and complete details. And be watching for the right “fishy subject” to feature in YOUR art project!



Mark your calendars: **Birch Lake Annual Meeting 2011** is set for **Saturday, July 30** to be followed by

## **1<sup>st</sup> Annual LAKE FEST!**

A celebration of all that we love about Birch Lake living! Invite your friends and recruit some new Lake Association Members!! Watch the summer newsletter for more specific details about this fun event.